



Grand Union House, London NW1
Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment
December 2018

EBA ref. 947

GRAND UNION HOUSE, 20 KENTISH TOWN ROAD, LONDON NW1 9NX
TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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APPENDIX A AVR Method Statement (Cityscape)

Cover photo: View north along Kentish Town Road , © Cityscape December 2018

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Date Issued	Version	Status	Notes	Initial
26/11/2018	01a	Draft	Team review only	EA/NB
28/11/2018	01b	Draft	Team review (incorporating GE comments on v1a)	EA/NB
05/12/2018	01c	Final	For planning submission	EA/NB

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) is submitted in support of a detailed planning application ('the Application') made on behalf of Camden Mixed Developments Limited ('the Applicant') for the partial demolition and redevelopment ('the Proposed Development') of Grand Union House, 16-20 Kentish Town Road, London ('the Site'). This report has been prepared by Ettwein Bridges Architects ('EBA').

1.2 This report assesses the visual impact of the proposed development by Andrew Philips Architects (December 2018) on the surrounding townscape and the settings of heritage assets in the vicinity of the application site.

1.3 It is recommended that this assessment be read alongside the Design and Access Statement and planning submission drawings prepared by the architects (December 2018), the Planning Statement by Gerald Eve (December 2018) and the Heritage Assessment (December 2018) prepared by Ettwein Bridges Architects.

Application Site

1.4 The site is located in the north-western corner of the triangular block between Kentish Town Road, Camden Road and Regent's Canal. The existing building at 20 Kentish Town Road occupies the eastern side of Kentish Town Road and is located on the former site of the 4 storey Art Deco main production building of the ABC factory (built in 1939 and demolished in the early 1980s). 20 Kentish Town Road, together with the Sainsbury's superstore and canal-side housing, forms part of the comprehensive re-development of the triangular site in the 1980s by Sainsbury's.

1.5 The majority of the site is within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area and the southern extent of the site (i.e. no 16 Kentish Town Road) remains within the Camden Town Conservation Area. None of the buildings within the application site are listed, however there are several listed and locally listed buildings nearby (see **Figure 1** for more detail).

1.6 Site photos and existing plans are included in **Appendix B** of the Heritage Statement (December 2018, EBA).

Assessment of Significance: Grand Union House

1.7 Completed 29 years ago, Grand Union House is an example of an office building of which there are numerous of examples in England. It is not an example of a rare building type. While it expresses some of the motifs of the High-Tech movement (i.e. shed-like external envelope offering full flexibility with an open

interior), it does not have the same finesse of the Sainsbury's supermarket on Camden Road. It forms part of the supermarket-led development by Sir Nicholas Grimshaw, but when assessed in isolation, it does not possess the architectural nor historic interest and is considered to detract from the Regent's Park CA.

1.8 The Proposed Development comprises: *Partial demolition and redevelopment of the existing building, to provide a new office (Class B1) building with associated roof terraces, ground floor flexible town centre uses (Class A1 and/or A3 and/or D2), and 6 affordable housing units, along with associated landscaping works.*

Scope of this TVIA

1.9 The Townscape and Visual Assessment considers the effects of the proposed development in relation to:

- the Proposed Development on designated areas of cultural heritage value at a national, regional and local level such as Conservation Areas, Listed Building and Registered Parks and Gardens;
- the Proposed Development on the physical characteristics of the Site and its surroundings and on townscape and landscape character; and
- the Proposed Development on locally and regionally important views.

1.10 The following report will not outline the history of the site nor assess its significance or the significance of heritage assets in the vicinity as this has already been done in detail in the Heritage Assessment and its accompanying appendices which should be read in conjunction with this TVIA.

1.11 **15 viewpoints** were identified through the process of scoping and agreed with the LPA in October 2018. The scale, mass and location of the proposed development has been illustrated through Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs) inserted into baseline photographs of the views as existing, to convey reliable visual information about the proposed development to assist the process of visual assessment and analysis of impact. The cumulative effect of other consented developments in relation to the proposed development has also been assessed.

1.12 The iterative design process considered mitigation measures such as appropriate height, scale and massing and use of materials appropriate to the local setting, for the Proposed Development.

Consultations

1.13 The design of the proposals has evolved through a comprehensive understanding of the baseline heritage and townscape conditions, assessment of potential effects of draft proposals, and consultation with relevant authorities. The applicant has fully engaged in the Design Review process, with the draft proposals first being presented to the LB Camden on the 13th December 2017.

1.14 The following stakeholders have been consulted during the scheme evolution period between Spring 2017 and the submission of the application:

- Sainsbury's
- LB Camden officers
- St. Michael's Church
- LB Camden – Design Review Panel
- Public Exhibition

Structure of this document

1.15 **Section 2** sets out the methodology used for assessing the townscape and visual effects of the proposed development with reference to current guidance and best practice. **Section 3** includes the townscape and visual assessment. **Appendix A** at the end of this report includes the AVR methodology (by Cityscape).

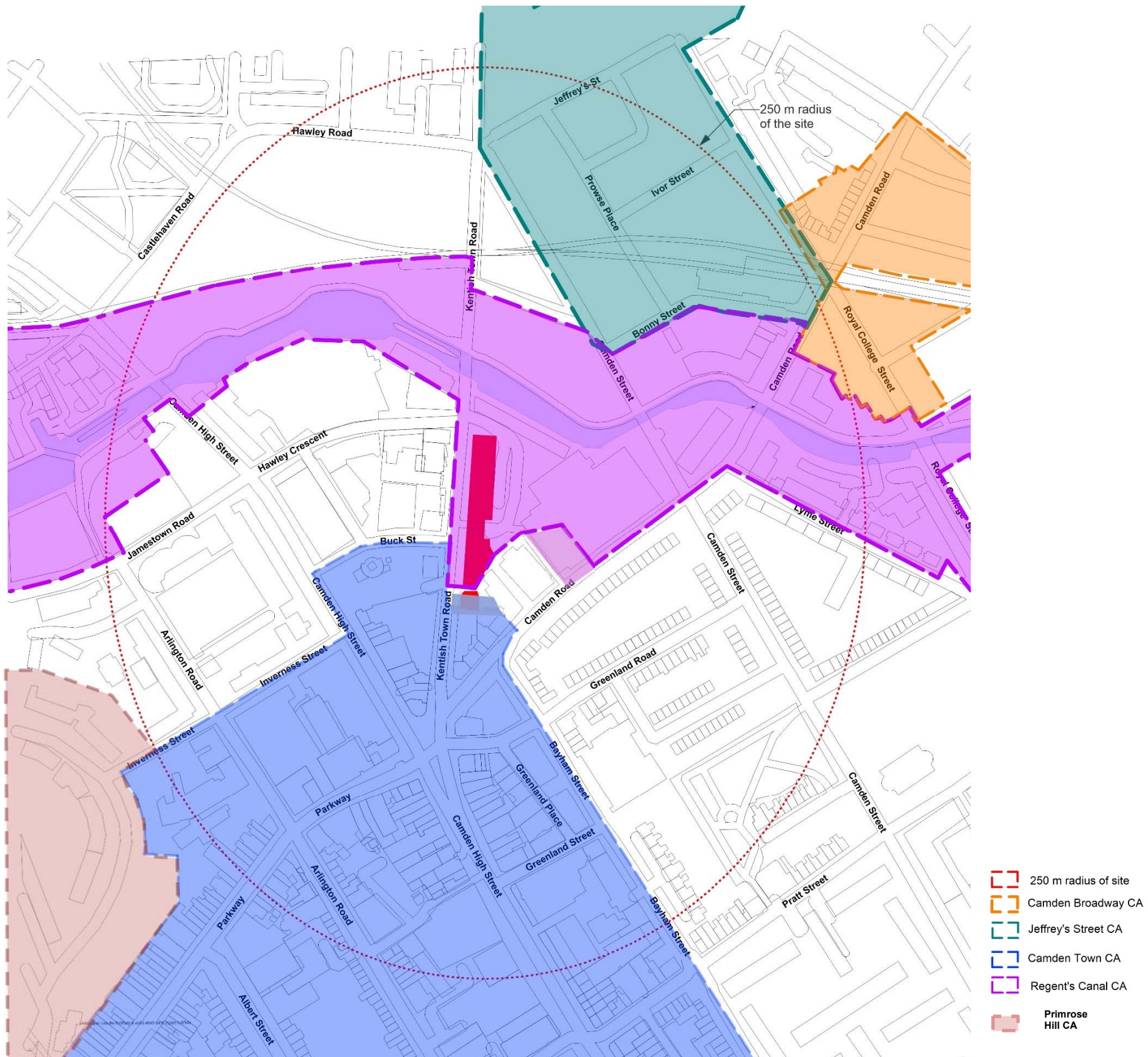


Figure 1. Conservation Areas
Source: Ettwein Bridges Architects (December 2018)

2.0 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Introduction

- 2.1. The following section explains the methods that have been used to carry out the TVIA. The assessments have been based on the planning application drawings, the Design and Access Statement and AVRs produced by the visualisation specialist (Cityscape). The methodology is based on current guidance and best practice and informed by the legislative and policy context.
- 2.2. Heritage assessment guidance is largely provided within the National Planning Policy Frameworks (NPPF, 2018) and the accompanying National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG, 2014 *et seq.*). Where matters of setting are considered, Historic England’s guidance on the *Setting of Heritage Assets* (2017) has been taken into account
- 2.3. It recommends the following broad approach to assessment, undertaken as a series of steps that apply proportionately to complex or more straightforward cases:
 - **Step 1:** Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
 - **Step 2:** Assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
 - **Step 3:** Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;
 - **Step 4:** Explore the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm; and
 - **Step 5:** Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

London View Management Framework (LVMF, 2012)

- 2.4. Although the application site is a considerable distance from any of the identified strategic viewing corridors, it nevertheless provides useful information on Assessment Process and Methodology.

Method of baseline data collection

- 2.5. An assessment was made of the Site and its surroundings in their existing states. This analysed the physical characteristics and the character of built heritage and townscape and considered the current status of the Site. This was supported by a study of maps and aerial photographs. Several site visits in 2017 were carried out to verify the accuracy of the record data. Record photographs were taken on the site visit.

Baseline conditions and assessment of significance

- 2.6. Baseline conditions will not be analysed in detail but only outlined under each viewpoint as a detailed assessment has been already carried out in the Heritage Assessment (December 2018) which should be read in conjunction with this report.
- 2.7. The views included in this study were selected by the project team in consultation with relevant stakeholders. **15 views** were agreed through the process of scoping from which Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs) could be produced (**Figure 1**).
- 2.8. Additional views were tested during the design process but have not been included in the visual assessment (**Section 3**) because the Proposed Development would not be visible, its impact would be insignificant or an alternative viewpoint from a comparable nearby location has been selected.
- 2.9. The selection of the final 15 viewpoints was based on the following factors:
 - i. Views that have been identified as significant by relevant stakeholders (e.g. in planning policy and guidance documents and conservation area appraisals);
 - ii. Other locations or views of particular sensitivity, including those viewpoints in which the Proposed Development may significantly affect the settings of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas; and
 - iii. Locations where there is extensive open space between the viewer and the Proposed Development so that it would be prominent rather than obscured by foreground buildings. This includes areas of open space that are important in a local context (e.g. for leisure purposes).
- 2.10. In order to assess the visual effects of the proposed development, the views are presented in **Section 3** as follows:
 - **Existing:** The view as existing;
 - **Proposed:** As existing view with the proposed development inserted into the view; and
 - **Cumulative:** As existing view, with proposed development inserted and other significant consented developments inserted (shown as an orange wireline)

- 2.11. The proposals are shown in each viewpoint using a defined AVR style following a consistent methodology contained within Appendix C of the London View Management Framework 2012

(LVMF). A summary of the AVR methodology has also been appended to this document (**Appendix A**).

- 2.12. The AVR style (**Table 1**) for each view was formally agreed with relevant stakeholders and is included is summarised in **Section 3 (Table 3)**.

Table 1. AVR classification types

Type	Description
AVR1	Location, size and degree of visibility of proposal A wireline representation showing the silhouette of the proposals confirming the degree of visibility with those parts occluded by existing structure and foliage, shown in dotted line
AVR2	As AVR1 + description of architectural form Often a simply shaded form using a uniform opaque material. Often referred to as a chalk model.
AVR3	As AVR2 + use of materials A fully rendered photorealistic representation of the proposed development illustrating the materials and lighting conditions.

- 2.13. The assessment will consider whether the effect of the proposed development on the townscape and built heritage is adverse, negligible or a beneficial:
 - **Beneficial effect** - Beneficial heritage /townscape and effects occur when the development would give rise to an improvement in townscape or view quality and the visual amenity of the viewer owing to:
 - enhancement of the setting of heritage assets or other townscape receptors of value;
 - enhancement or reinforcement of the key characteristics of the townscape character zones; and/or
 - the introduction of features or elements of high design quality which enhance the existing character and visual enjoyment.
 - **Adverse effect** - Adverse heritage / effects occur when the development would give rise to a deterioration in townscape or view quality and the visual amenity of the viewer owing to:
 - harm to the setting of heritage assets or other townscape receptors of value;

- harm to the key characteristics of townscape character zones; and/or
- the introduction of features or elements of poor design quality which detract from the existing character and harm visual enjoyment.
- **Neutral effect** - An effect is understood to be neutral when the predicted change would, on balance, result in neither an improvement, nor a deterioration of the townscape, visual and built heritage resource compared with the existing situation.

Cumulative views

2.14. The only cumulative scheme to be included in the TVIA is. This was agreed with the LPA in October 2018.

Table 2. Cumulative schemes		
LPA ref.	Address	Description
2014/7908/P	140-146 Camden Street London NW1 9PF	Demolition of existing buildings, excavation of extension to existing single storey basement and erection of 1 - 8 storey building comprising 2,026sqm of commercial floorspace (flexible B1 use class) and 52 residential units (4 x studio, 19 x 1-bed, 18 x 2-bed and 11 x 3-bed C3 use class) with associated landscaping.

3.0 VIEWS ASSESSMENT

- 3.1. The townscape and visual assessments place the Proposed Development in its urban context. To avoid repetition here, the detailed baseline assessment of heritage assets, their significance and settings, townscape and visual contexts, including policy constraints and guidance, has been outlined above. Relevant elements are noted in the assessment of each view. The assessment of the effects of the Proposed Development follows the methodology explained in **Chapter 2** on sensitivity and magnitude including scale and magnitude, degree of contrast. Any balancing of positive and negative effects is explained.
- 3.2. **15 viewpoints** were identified through the process of scoping and were confirmed after consultation with LB Camden. The viewpoints included in this assessment (**Table 3**) have been selected to show the maximum visibility of the Proposed Development, even if in dynamic and panoramic views this may be fleeting and will not be the complete experience.

Table 3. Summary of viewpoints included in this document (see Figure 2).

Ref.	Description	Distance	AVR type	Winter/summer	Day/Night
01	Gloucester Crescent: junction with Inverness Street	Long-distance	AVR1	Winter	Day
02	Inverness Street: View NE	Long-distance	AVR1	Winter	Day
03	Britannia Junction: panorama NE and NW	Mid-distance	AVR1	Winter	Day
04	Kentish Town Road: View NW	Mid-distance	AVR3	Winter	Day
05	Camden High Street: Junction with Buck Street	Mid-distance	AVR1	Winter	Day
06	Buck Street: junction with Stucley Place	Short-distance	AVR3	Winter	Day
07	Camden High Street: Junction with Hawley Crescent	Mid-distance	AVR1	Winter	Day
08	Regent's Canal: towpath looking East/ SE	Mid-distance	AVR1	Winter	Day
09	Regent's Canal: towpath looking SE	Short-distance	AVR3	Winter	Day
10	Kentish Town Road Bridge	Short-distance	AVR3	Winter	Day
11	Sainsbury's car park: to the rear of the site, looking from Grand Union Walk to the site, St Michael's Church and Sainsbury's	Short-distance	AVR3	Winter	Day
12	Camden Road: Junction with Lyme Street	Mid-distance	AVR1	Winter	Day
13	Camden Road: looking West between St Michael's Church and the lower part of Sainsburys	Short-distance	AVR3	Winter	Day
14	Camden Road: NW from bus stop S	Short-distance	AVR3	Winter	Day
15	St Martin's Gardens: Southern section looking North	Long-distance	AVR1	Winter	Day

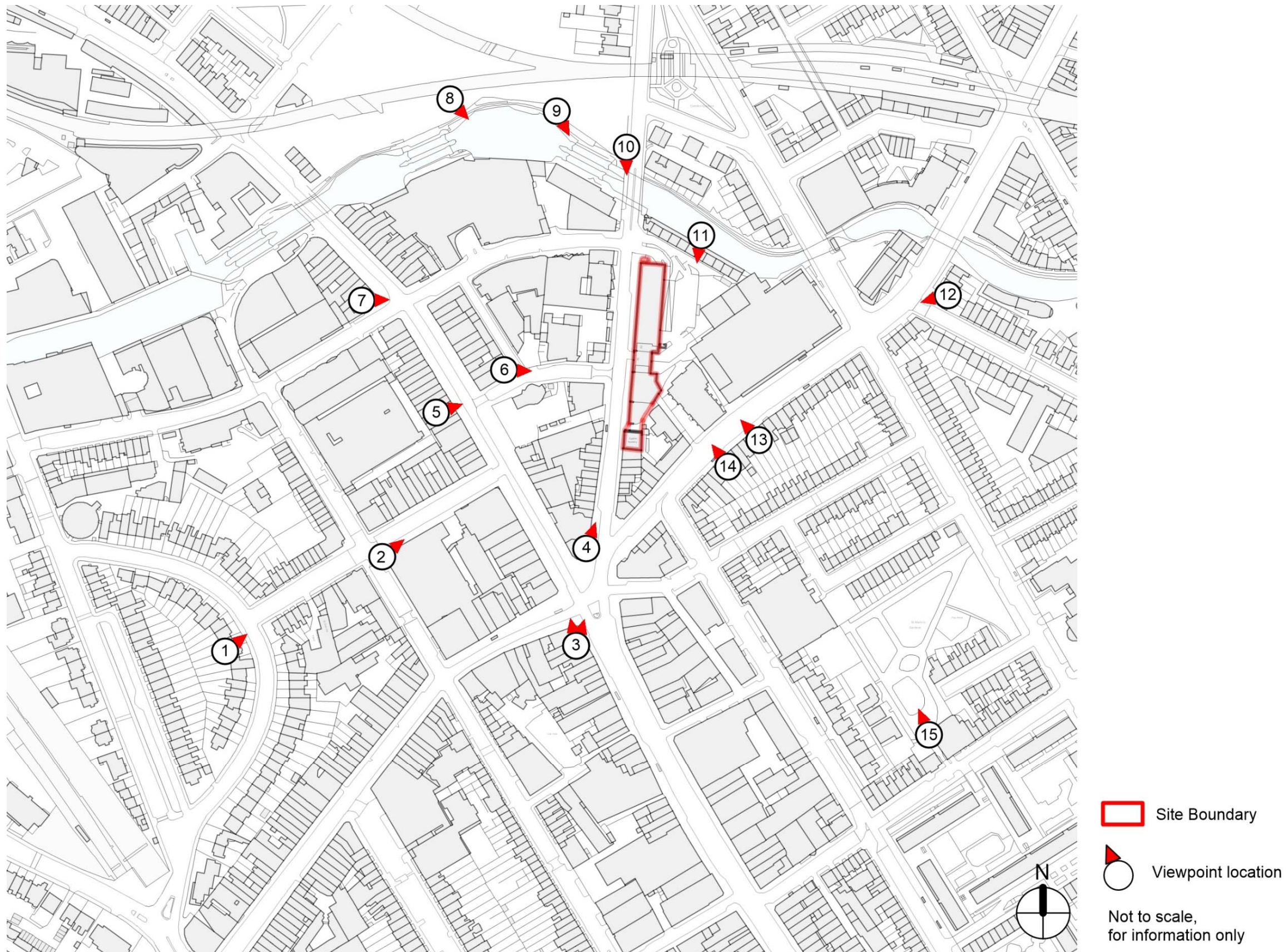


Figure 2. Viewpoint locations in the vicinity of the Application Site (EBA, December 2018).

VIEW 01. Gloucester Crescent: junction with Inverness Street

EXISTING



Image © Cityscape 2018



Description of the view:

The viewpoint is located within the Primrose Hill Conservation Area on the western pavement of Gloucester Gardens which comprises residential properties with the houses set back from the road and substantial front gardens containing many large trees (not visible in the view).

Inverness Street, visible in the main foreground and middleground of the view, is a wide road that forms a transition from the lively urban character of Camden Town to the leafier mid-C19 large scale residential character of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area. The street, with its southern section remaining within the Camden Town Conservation Area, is characterised by modest-scaled, predominantly three-storey buildings that contain a mix of uses, predominantly commercial in character on its southern side and residential properties on the north side. There are also a number of listed mid-19th century terrace houses on the Street, located close to the highway with narrow lightwells and railings. These properties are detailed with rusticated stucco at ground floor level, stucco detailing to window openings and cornices and iron balconies.

The view is terminated by 190 Camden High Street (within the Camden Town Conservation Area) with the top floor of Shirley House and 37-39 Camden Road on the skyline above visible beyond.

VIEW 01. Gloucester Crescent: junction with Inverness Street

PROPOSED



Image © Cityscape 2018



Description of the proposal:

The proposed development will be visible in the centre of the image and will appear above 190 Camden High Street (within the Camden Town Conservation Area) in the middleground. The proposed development will not be visible in its entirety with only the southern half of the building and its gable elevations visible obliquely from this viewpoint and the northern half obscured by existing built form and vegetation in the foreground. The lower, 3 storey residential element of the proposed development will remain obscured by existing townscape in the middleground on the right.

Effects on the view:

The proposed development will become a new element in the view. Its distinct roof form will be readily discernible from this viewpoint. The detailed materiality, comprising glazed green ceramic tile will not be readily perceivable from this viewpoint, albeit the green tonality of the building will contrast against the clear skyline beyond. The saw-tooth profile will be discernible in the view. It will add a quick rhythm and interest to the skyline. The proposed development will appear much lower in the sky from the built form in the foreground (i.e. the Grade II listed terraces fronting Inverness Street) and will not affect the significance of these assets.

The proposed development will mark the site's important town centre location in an appropriate way, including its position on the route from Camden High Street through to Camden Road and will be a positive addition to the existing townscape.

VIEW 01. Gloucester Crescent: junction with Inverness Street

CUMULATIVE



Image © Cityscape 2018



Description of the view:

The cumulative scheme identified in **Table 2** will not be visible from this location

Effects on the view: No effect

VIEW 02. Inverness Street: View NE

EXISTING



Image © Cityscape 2018



Description of the view:

The viewpoint is located on the southern pavement of Inverness Street looking NE of which the southern side is included in the Camden Town Conservation Area (i.e. the building on the left along Inverness Street are not located within the Conservation Area). None of the buildings on either side of Inverness Street are statutorily listed. The southern side (RHS) comprises largely of the blank red brick side elevation of the Bingo Hall on the corner of Arlington Road and Inverness Street.

Inverness Street was originally noted for its vegetable and fruit market and has been recently landscaped to create a shared space for pedestrians and vehicles.

The rhythm of the original height and scale of the street has survived with no other built form visible above the chimney stacks on the left. The view is terminated by a three-storey terrace 186-190 Camden High Street.

VIEW 02. Inverness Street: View NE

PROPOSED



Image © Cityscape 2018



Description of the proposal:
The proposed development will be visible in the centre of the image and will appear above n186-190 Camden High Street (within the Camden Town Conservation Area) in the middleground. The proposed development will not be visible in its entirety with only the southern half of the building and its gable elevations visible obliquely and the northern half obscured by existing built form in the foreground. The lower, 3 storey residential element of the proposed development will remain obscured by existing townscape in the middleground on the right.

Effects on the view:
The proposed development will become a new element in the view. Its distinctive saw-tooth roof form will be readily discernible from this viewpoint. The detailed materiality, comprising glazed green ceramic tile will be somewhat discernible from this viewpoint with the green tonality of the building contrasting against the clear sky beyond. The proposed development will not rise higher from the line of the terrace on the northern side of Inverness Street (LHS). Although the architectural expression of the proposed development will contrast with the more traditional materiality of the terrace, its scale and height will adhere to the established built form in the foreground and instead add a layer of visual interest and depth to the view.

The proposed development will mark the site's location in an appropriate way, including its position on the route from Camden High Street through to Camden Road and will be a positive addition to the existing townscape.

VIEW 02. Inverness Street: View NE

CUMULATIVE



Description of the view:
The cumulative scheme identified in **Table 2** will not be visible from this location

Effects on the view: No effect

Image © Cityscape 2018